

Introduction

To gauge student progress toward meeting the state's core curriculum content Standards, the New Jersey Department of Education has developed a comprehensive set of assessments that measure knowledge and skills at grades three, four, eight, and eleven. The third- and fourth-grade New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK) is the newest component of the state's assessment program, which also includes the Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment (GEPA) and the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA). Since not every indicator can be assessed through a statewide written examination, individual districts will be involved in measuring the attainment of some performance expectations outlined in the standards.

This document delineates the specifications used to create the third- and fourth-grade language arts assessments and to measure student proficiency in the knowledge and skills outlined for language arts literacy in *New Jersey's Core Curriculum Content Standards* (1996, 2004). The knowledge and skills described for language arts literacy are recursive and cumulative. Students build their skills gradually, developing language ability that increases in complexity as they encounter, analyze, and use language in increasingly complex ways. Curriculum specialists and teachers may use these specifications, along with the Language Arts Literacy Curriculum Framework (1998) and the standards themselves, to improve instruction at the district, school, and classroom levels.

What Students Are Expected to Know and Be Able to Do

The purpose of New Jersey's statewide assessments is to measure what students at specific grade levels know and are able to do. The assessments are not designed to be diagnostic nor do students' scores on these assessments equate with classroom grades. Instead, the assessments determine whether students are achieving the knowledge and skills described in New Jersey's core curriculum content standards (NJ CCCS). The Language Arts Literacy components of the state's third-, fourth-, eighth-, and high school assessments focus on students' skills in using language to construct meaning through text. The five language arts literacy standards and cumulative progress indicators that illustrate the standards inform the knowledge and skills that are assessed by the NJ ASK, GEPA, and HSPA, as well as the philosophy inherent in the design of the assessment experience.

Development of the Language Arts Literacy component of the NJ ASK, GEPA, and HSPA began with the premise that assessment is integral to curriculum and, inversely, curriculum is integral to assessment. Good assessment is a means for students to learn about a topic – to ask questions, to speculate, to explore new ideas, and to form tentative opinions – and it should provoke their curiosity. Only when that curiosity is engaged can assessment accurately reflect the knowledge and skills that students have access to and can draw on in their everyday lives and in school.

Through good assessment, too, students should be able to recognize their strengths and challenges as learners. Meaningful reflection on these is essential to the individual's growth and development, and it should be an outcome of any assessment. It is the hope of the educators who served on committees to develop the state's language arts literacy assessments, that as students experience the NJ ASK, GEPA, and HSPA, they will experience the rewards of thinking, learning, communicating, and aesthetic expression.

Overview of the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK)

The Language Arts Literacy component of New Jersey’s statewide assessments is an integrated, project-oriented unit through which students draw upon their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing experiences to think, to learn, to communicate, and to create original work. As with most instructional materials that are familiar to students, the language arts assessments provide a variety of texts, illustrations, and activities that are intended to engage and sustain student interest in the content and sequence of assessment topics and tasks.

The NJ ASK assesses skills in 4 content clusters:

- Writing
- Reading
- Working with Text [Interpreting Text]
- Analyzing/Critiquing Text

These content clusters are integrated to provide a sequence of diverse written, aural, and visual materials and activities that students will encounter over a two-day period as they read, write, listen, and view:

ASSESSMENT CLUSTER	TASK	TIME
1. Writing: speculate (picture prompt)	story	25 minutes
2. Reading: narrative	MC, OE ¹ questions	50 minutes
3. Listening/reading: poem		
4. Writing: explain (poem-linked prompt)	composition	25 minutes
5. Reading: everyday text	MC, OE questions	25 minutes

The variety and sequence are designed to engage students’ interest and elicit clear demonstrations of what students know and are able to do. In each assessment, students alternate between generating their own text and analyzing text generated by others. This alternation permits them to use and enrich their literacy experiences as they demonstrate their knowledge of and skills in language use in varied contexts of language arts literacy.

Students encounter performance-based tasks for writing, as well as multiple-choice and open-ended items for reading. Most open-ended reading items ask students to write a paragraph or more in response. However, for students taking the NJ ASK, one open-ended question may require students to work with a graphic organizer.

The questions and activities on NJ ASK are designed to elicit students’ demonstration of the Language Arts Literacy Core Curriculum Content Standards that were developed by a committee of teachers, teacher educators, supervisors, administrators, parents, and business representatives. The assessments are also designed to measure student’s demonstration of abilities for Working with Text and Analyzing/Critiquing Text.

¹ MC: multiple-choice item; OE: open-ended item

Working with Text (NJ ASK) focuses on ideas and information that are presented in the text and available either literally or by extrapolation. Questions and tasks ask students to identify or explain a central idea or theme; supporting details; directions, ideas, or other information extrapolated from the text; paraphrasing; text organization; and purposes for reading.

Successful responses to reading questions in this cluster demonstrate that students have synthesized the ideas and information in the text and constructed meaning from what they have read.

Analyzing/Critiquing Text (NJ ASK) focuses on students' analysis of what they have read. These questions provide students with opportunities to reflect on and analyze their understanding of the text. Questions and tasks in this cluster ask students to analyze aspects of the text that lead to their own questioning, predictions, and opinions, or to analyze what specific ideas or information contribute to or reveal in the text.

Students pose or respond to questions that enhance their understanding, predict tentative meanings, form opinions, or draw conclusions about the text and the author's techniques. Questions and tasks that focus on this kind of analysis will ask students to identify or explain the fundamentals and nuances contributed by textual conventions and literary elements.

Writing tasks are scored using a holistic scoring rubric developed specifically to focus on essential features of good writing and to assess students' performance in composing written language. Each writing sample is scored on a 1- to 5-point scale, which is a modified version of New Jersey's Registered Holistic Scoring Rubric.

Students' responses to reading-based open-ended items are scored using a 0- to 4-point scale, the Open-Ended Scoring Rubric, which is designed to measure students' levels of understanding. Each open-ended question has specific requirements that guide use of the rubric to score student responses.

SCORING RUBRICS FOR NJ ASK

Writing	Registered Holistic Scoring Rubric
Reading	Open-Ended Scoring Rubric with Open-Ended Scoring Guide

The matrix on the following page shows the content clusters and cognitive skills assessed in the Language Arts Literacy component of the NJ ASK. Although the matrix provides a two-dimensional classification that can be used to categorize certain test items in a single cell, the activities inviting students to generate their own text (writing) will be scored holistically and thus will encompass more than one cell of the matrix.

The third- and fourth-grade assessments invite students to construct meaning as they generate their own texts (written, spoken, and visual) and work with texts generated by others (for reading, listening, and viewing). As students strive to construct meaning, they engage in interpreting, analyzing/critiquing, and extending their own understanding of the text.

	Matrix of Content Clusters and Skills					
	For Generating Text			For Generated Text		
	Writing	Speaking	Viewing	Reading	Listening	Viewing
Working with Text	Development of central idea Development of supporting details Elaboration Organization of ideas			Recognition of central idea or theme Recognition of supporting details Extrapolation of information/ following directions Paraphrasing/retelling (Vocabulary) Recognition of text organization Recognition of a purpose for reading		
Analyzing/ Critiquing Text	Use of writing strategies Use of varied sentence structure/word choice Forming of opinions Development of conclusions Use of textual conventions of and literary elements Consideration of audience and purpose			Questioning, Clarifying, Predicting Prediction of tentative meanings Forming of opinions Drawing of conclusions Interpretation of textual conventions and literary elements		

Definitions of Content Clusters

The NJ ASK invites students to approach text¹ (written, aural, and visual) with three different perspectives: interpreting text, analyzing and critiquing text, and extending understanding of the text.

WORKING WITH OR INTERPRETING TEXT

Working with text involves activities and strategies that contribute to reformulating meaning, including:

- Establishing and explaining a central idea or focus,
- Developing explanations and extrapolating information,
- Developing specific purposes and inferring purposes, and
- Planning and recognizing the organization of texts.

Questions in this cluster focus on ideas and information that are presented in the text and available either literally or by extrapolation.

ANALYZING AND CRITIQUING TEXT

Students will be able to pose or respond to questions in ways that enhance their and others' understandings of the text. They will predict tentative meanings of texts and plan texts as temporary thinking on their way to drawing conclusions or forming opinions. These conclusions and opinions will eventually take on more formal expressions when students move to extending their understanding of the text. Through this process of analysis and critique, students will understand both the functions and nuances of textual conventions and literary elements.

Questions and tasks in this cluster provide students with opportunities to reflect on and analyze their understanding of the text. These questions ask students to analyze aspects of the text that lead to their own questioning, predictions, and opinions, or to analyze what specific ideas or information contribute to or reveal in the text.

Extending Understanding of the Text

Students will be able to create original works. Some of these works are textual, more finished products that they can make available to specific audiences and/or for specific purposes. Some extensions of understanding result in the reader appreciating a text or its features, considering other related texts, or interacting with others' related ideas, all of which extend literacy. Some extensions of understanding lead students to take action. This action will include problem-solving, making decisions, and creating an original work, which may lead to heightened social awareness and action.

¹**Definition of Text** The term *text*, as used in these specifications, is consistent with the use of the term in the Language Arts Literacy component of the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. *Text* refers to any printed or oral use of language. It also includes any visual communication that we “read.”

WRITING

Writing is a complex and recursive process that requires students to generate, organize, and convey ideas and information for a variety of purposes and audiences. Effective writers are able to communicate in varying forms and styles. For this component of the assessment, third- and fourth-grade students will complete two writing tasks: one speculative and one expository.

The writing prompts will present topics that allow students to draw on material in the assessment as well as their own prior knowledge to establish a context for their writing. In one task, students will view a picture and use their understanding of the picture to develop a story. In a second task, students will listen to a poem and then respond to a written prompt that extends an idea introduced by the poem.

Each writing task will provide space for students to plan their ideas. Students will be encouraged to use that space to organize their ideas using a pre-writing strategy (e.g., making a web, a list, or some other sort of graphic organizer) of their own choosing. The instructions will direct students to write their story or composition on the lined pages provided. This version of their writing is considered a first draft.

As part of a large-scale assessment, each type of writing task is administered in a consistent format and in a constant time segment of 25 minutes. Instructions guide students to use the first few minutes to develop ideas for their writing and the last few minutes to review what they have written and, if needed, revise part(s) of their texts. Students will have a writer's checklist that they may use as a resource while they are writing.

Writing prompts will introduce the following elements:

- meaningful topics that broaden and enrich students' perspectives;
- a clear focus;
- a clearly identifiable theme or central idea;
- a clearly stated purpose;
- a context for reflection as an aid to elaboration.

Writing prompts will invite responses that are

- age- and grade-level appropriate;
- clearly focused with a clear purpose;
- effectively elaborated with details;
- logically organized, with a clear opening and closing;
- varied in their vocabulary and sentence structure;
- reflective of a strong stance;
- sensitive to audience.

Notes:

1. The prewriting/planning space for each writing task is designed solely for students' brainstorming and is not scored.
2. Due to the time constraints of large-scale assessment, students will not have enough time to completely rewrite or copy over their drafts.

READING

Narrative Text

For the purposes of this assessment, “narrative text” is defined as literature written primarily to tell a story. Good narrative literature, which establishes or develops a conflict, addresses common aspects of human existence. Because appropriate literature may contain unsettling or disturbing issues or events, text selected for the assessment will provide a positive resolution and affirm the dignity of the human spirit. Selections will provide students with opportunities to grow intellectually, socially, and emotionally as they consider universal themes and diverse cultures and perspectives.

Narrative passages will be selected from previously published literature of between 900 and 1300 words for grade 3 and 1400 and 2000 words for grade 4. Students will respond to multiple-choice and open-ended questions about those passages. The texts will have a strong thematic focus, follow traditional narrative structure, and contain the following elements:

- significant themes that are age- and grade-level appropriate;
- a clearly identifiable problem/conflict and resolution;
- a well-organized plot with clearly developed and meaningful events;
- well-developed characters;
- settings integral to the plot;
- literary elements, such as imagery and foreshadowing;
- a range of vocabulary for which adequate context is provided.

Everyday Text

“Everyday text” is defined as text that people encounter in their everyday lives. It is text written and designed to convey information about a topic and/or to show how to do something. Everyday texts of varying formats will be selected and/or adapted from previously published sources such as magazines, newspapers, “how-to” books, and hands-on activity kits and workbooks. Everyday texts will range in length from 700 to 1,000 words for grade 3 and from 1,000 to 1,400 words for grade 4. The texts will have a strong central idea or purpose and will contain the following elements:

- engaging topics that are age- and grade-level appropriate;
- a clear, positive focus;
- a clearly developed explanation of ideas, activities, or actions;
- a clearly developed sequence of ideas, activities, or actions;
- performable activities or actions;
- vivid and clear illustrations;
- a range of vocabulary for which adequate context is provided.

Notes:

1. In addition to the two text types mentioned above, students will listen to and read poetry related to topics introduced in other sections of the assessment.
2. Item types will not be bound to specific text types but will apply across all genres (e.g., everyday texts may present literary elements).

SKILLS SPECIFICATIONS

Writing

Writing is a complex process in which students draw upon their speaking, listening, reading, and viewing experiences to think, learn, communicate, and create. Students taking the NJ ASK will be expected to write for a variety of purposes and audiences. In each situation, specific writing prompts will establish the task, provide ideas for writing, and relate to topics introduced in other sections of the assessment.

The NJ ASK will introduce two types of writing tasks. The first one asks students to speculate and the second to explain. The criteria for assessing each written response are set by the scoring rubric. Student responses at the elementary level are scored with a modified version of the Registered Holistic Scoring Rubric.

Students will:

- respond clearly and appropriately to a given prompt.
- select a focus and provide appropriate details to support that focus.
- organize the response to include an introduction, appropriate transitions, and a conclusion.
- use elaboration to engage the audience.
- use varied sentence structure and word choice.
- use conventions of print and literary forms.
- use language appropriate to the audience and purpose of the writing task.

Writing Prompts for NJ ASK

Picture Prompts, which are presented in full color, depict an artist's interpretation of a scene from a piece of published literature. Students are not expected to retell that published story but are encouraged, instead, to use some or all of the details in the picture to create their own stories. Students who have had sustained exposure through reading and listening to many types of literary texts demonstrate writing abilities that include an understanding of text structures and appropriate organization, elaboration of meaningful details, logical progression of ideas, effective use of transitions, varied and sophisticated syntax, and vivid word choice.

Poem Prompts, which are verbal writing tasks, are linked to ideas introduced in a poem that students listen to and/or read silently as the examiner reads the poem aloud. The poem-linked prompt asks students to explore an idea from the poem and to relate the idea to their experience and/or understanding in a sustained text that is called a *composition*. The poem prompt uses such words as *describe*, *explain*, and *analyze* in order to encourage students to develop their ideas more fully. All poem prompts propose categories of ideas that are intended to help students structure their writing, but the scoring of their writing provides quite a bit of latitude in the actual shaping of their topic. Please note that the purpose of this task is to elicit sustained writing on a topic introduced in the prompt and that students are not being asked to write a poem. Students who write a poem will be scored WF (wrong format).

Reading

Reading is a complex process through which readers actively construct meaning and connect with others' ideas. Current research defines a competent reader not as one who demonstrates mastery of a set of isolated skills, but as one who integrates information in the text with what he or she already knows.

Students taking the NJ ASK will read and respond to two text types: narrative and everyday. For each text type, multiple-choice and open-ended questions will serve to assess students' literal and inferential thinking. Questions will be based on those skills that critical readers use to understand, analyze, and evaluate texts. Students will be assessed on their ability to interpret and critique/analyze the content, meaning, and organization of texts.

Students will:

- recognize a theme or central idea.
- recognize details that develop or support the main idea.
- extrapolate information and/or follow directions.
- paraphrase, retell, or interpret words, phrases, or sentences from the text.
- recognize the organizational structure of the text.
- recognize a purpose for reading.
- use reading strategies (e.g., questioning, clarifying, predicting).
- make tentative predictions of meaning.
- make judgments, form opinions, and draw conclusions from the text.
- interpret textual conventions and literary elements.

Each reading passage is followed by seven questions focused on that passage. These questions include both multiple-choice and open-ended questions that target their skills in two clusters: Working with Text and Analyzing/Critiquing Text. For students taking NJ ASK3, greater emphasis is given to the Working with Text cluster.

PASSAGE TYPE	Grade 3 Questions	Grade 4 Questions	TIME
Reading: narrative or story	6 MC, 1 OE	5 MC, 2 OE	50 minutes
Reading: everyday text	6 MC, 1 OE	6 MC, 1 OE	25 minutes

NJ ASK focuses more on students' understanding and analysis of the text than on recall. Therefore, students benefit from using a number of essential reading strategies. Some assessment questions, for example, identify a specific page number to encourage students to turn back to the text to review and to confirm ideas and information before they respond. Even when a question omits a specific page reference, however, reviewing the text is a useful strategy to confirm and to enhance understanding.

Following are descriptions of the items that are developed for the two reading clusters:

Working with Text

Working with Text focuses on ideas and information that are presented in the text and available either literally or by extrapolation. Successful responses to these questions demonstrate that students have synthesized the ideas and information in the text and constructed meaning from what they have read.

These questions target students’

Recognition of a central idea or theme

A central idea or theme is a statement that is broad enough to cover the entire scope of the reading passage. The central idea or theme may be stated or implied, but clues to it are found in the ideas that tend to recur in the text. Examples of a central idea or theme statement include:

Imagination helps us to solve problems.
Ordinary objects can be used to create unusual art.

Recognition of supporting details

These questions focus on meaningful details that contribute to the development of a character or the plot, or that develop ideas and information that are essential to the central idea of a text.

Extrapolation of information

These questions focus on ideas and information that are implied by, but not explicit in, the text. For example, students may be asked to draw from cues provided in the text in order to identify how a character feels.

Paraphrasing, Vocabulary

These questions focus on the meaning of words used in the text and elicit students’ use of effective reading strategies to determine the meaning. Targeted vocabulary will always occur within a semantic and syntactic context that students should draw on to respond to the question. These questions provide page numbers to encourage students to turn back to the text to examine the context.

Recognition of text organization

Text organization encompasses the patterns of organization that characterize the respective genres. For the narratives, questions focus on setting, character, and plot as well as on any distinctive pattern within the story such as repetition. For everyday texts, questions address structural features such as section topics, charts, and illustrations in addition to patterns of organization within the text (such as sequence, comparison-contrast, or cause-effect).

Recognition of a purpose for reading

These questions, which focus on the reader’s purpose, address reasons for reading a particular text. A story, for example, may convey specific information about a species of animal or a culture although that may not be the primary purpose of the text.

Analyzing/Critiquing Text

Analyzing/Critiquing Text focuses on students' analysis of what they have read. These questions provide students with opportunities to reflect on and analyze their understanding of the text. Questions in this cluster ask students to analyze aspects of the text that lead to their own questioning, predictions, and opinions, or to analyze what a specific idea or piece of information contributes to or reveals in the text.

These questions target students' analytical skills:

Questioning, Clarifying, Predicting

These questions draw on students' use of reading strategies to construct meaning. The questions introduce a focus and a context for responding (e.g., asking a question of the author or a character), and ask students to select and analyze ideas and information from the text to develop a response. Given the nature of this task, these questions are almost always open-ended items.

Prediction of tentative meaning

These questions focus on statements within the text that introduce some ambiguity: either the ideas are not fully explained or the statement uses language that can be read in two or more ways. For these questions, students use their knowledge of language and of the context within the reading passage to analyze the meaning of a particular statement.

Forming of opinions

These questions elicit students' response to aspects of the text. The questions introduce a focus (e.g., whether the main character would make a good friend) and ask students to select and analyze ideas and information from the text to develop a response. Given the nature of this task, these questions are always open-ended items.

Making judgments, Drawing conclusions

These questions ask students to draw conclusions based on knowledge they have garnered from the ideas and information within the text. For example, students might be asked to analyze how the setting (e.g., the season of the year) affects the sequence of events within a story, or to analyze the effect of skipping a step in a certain procedure.

Literary elements and textual conventions

These questions focus on devices used by the author. Students might be asked to analyze what a specific metaphor conveys about a character in the story, or why an author uses italics for certain words.

Scoring Methods, Charts, and Checklists

The language arts literacy component of NJ ASK offers a variety of multiple-choice questions, open-ended items, and performance-based tasks. The differences in these activities demand varying scoring methods that reflect the distinctive qualities of the respective types of tasks students will encounter.

Writing

A modified version of the Registered Holistic Scoring Rubric (see page 13) is used to score the sustained writing tasks. This 1-5 point scale emphasizes content/organization, sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. As in the past, students will also have a copy of the Writer's Checklist (see page 16) to use as a resource while they write.

Reading

The Open-ended Scoring Rubric, a 0-4 point scale, is used to score student responses to open-ended items for reading. This rubric, which is annotated in the Open-ended Scoring Guide, emphasizes students' use of appropriate situations and ideas in the text as support for their explanation and analysis (see pages 14-15).

GRADE 3 CLUSTER	TASK	POINTS	TOTAL POINTS
Writing: speculate (picture prompt)	story	10	
Writing: explain (poem-linked prompt)	composition	10	
WRITING TOTAL			20
Reading: narrative	6 MC	6	
Reading: narrative	1 OE	4	
Reading: everyday text	6 MC	6	
Reading: everyday text	1 OE	4	
READING TOTAL			20

GRADE 4 CLUSTER	TASK	POINTS	TOTAL POINTS
Writing: speculate (picture prompt)	story	10	
Writing: explain (poem-linked prompt)	composition	10	
WRITING TOTAL			20
Reading: narrative	5 MC	5	
Reading: narrative	1 OE	8	
Reading: everyday text	6 MC	6	
Reading: everyday text	1 OE	4	
READING TOTAL			23

NEW JERSEY REGISTERED HOLISTIC SCORING RUBRIC (MODIFIED)

In scoring, consider the grid of written language	Inadequate Command	Limited Command	Partial Command	Adequate Command	Strong Command
Score	1	2	3	4	5
Content and Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May lack opening and/or closing Minimal response to topic; uncertain focus No planning evident; disorganized Details random, inappropriate, or barely apparent No apparent control Severe/numerous errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May lack opening and/or closing Attempts to focus May drift or shift focus Attempts organization Few, if any, transitions between ideas Details lack elaboration, i.e., highlight paper Numerous errors Excessive monotony/same structure Numerous errors Numerous serious errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May lack opening and/or closing Usually has single focus Some lapses or flaws in organization May lack some transitions between ideas Repetitious details Several unelaborated details Errors/patterns of errors may be evident Little variety in syntax Some errors Patterns of errors evident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally has opening and/or closing Single focus Ideas loosely connected Transitions evident Uneven development of details Some errors that do not interfere with meaning Some variety Generally correct No consistent pattern of errors Some errors that do not interfere with meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening and closing Single focus Sense of unity and coherence Key ideas developed Logical progression of ideas Moderately fluent Attempts compositional risks Details appropriate and varied Few errors Variety in syntax appropriate and effective Few errors Few errors
Usage					
Sentence Construction					
Mechanics					

NON-SCORABLE RESPONSES	NR = No Response	Student wrote too little to allow a reliable judgment of his/her writing.
	OT = Off Topic/ Off Task	Student did not write on the assigned topic/task, or the student attempted to copy the prompt.
	NE = Not English	Student wrote in a language other than English.
	WF = Wrong Format	Student did not respond in the format (or mode) designated in the prompt.

Content/Organization	Usage	Sentence Construction	Mechanics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates intended message to intended audience Relates to topic Opening and closing Focused Logical progression of ideas Transitions Appropriate details and information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tense formation Subject-verb agreement Pronouns usage/agreement Word choice/meaning Proper Modifiers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variety of type, structure, and length Correct construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spelling Capitalization Punctuation

Note: All unscorable responses, (NSRs), with the exception of NR, must be coded by the Scoring Director.

OPEN-ENDED SCORING RUBRIC For Reading, Listening, and Viewing **(Modified)**

Points	Criteria
4	A 4-point response clearly demonstrates understanding of the task, completes all requirements, and provides a clear and focused explanation/opinion that links to or extends aspects of the text.
3	A 3-point response demonstrates an understanding of the task, addresses all requirements, and provides some explanation/opinion using situations or ideas from the text as support.
2	A 2-point response may address all of the requirements, but demonstrates a partial understanding of the task, and uses text incorrectly or with limited success resulting in an inconsistent or flawed explanation.
1	A 1-point response demonstrates minimal understanding of the task, does not address part of the requirements, and provides only a vague reference to or no use of the text.
0	A 0-point response is irrelevant or off-topic.

Open-Ended Scoring Guide for Reading, Listening, and Viewing

Points	Guide
4	<p>A student at this score point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synthesizes the passage/story • Draws appropriate and logical conclusions that are elaborated • Makes relevant and controlled use of text • Provides appropriate details and accurate explanations
3	<p>A student at this score point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May synthesize the story but specific text reference may only be implied • Provides a simple but accurate explanation • Makes relevant use of text to support or explain • Draws appropriate conclusions that may be elaborated
2	<p>A student at this score point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides some text reference which may be incorrect or provides a general explanation that omits specific links to the text • May focus on irrelevant or minor details • May simply retell the story or passage • May imply story details by relating life experiences, by describing story elements, or by identifying concepts in the passage
1	<p>A student at this score point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misinterprets the task or fails to address part of the task • Presents one simple idea or detail • Provides no explanation • Does not clearly refer to the text
0	<p>A student at this score point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completely misinterprets the task • Merely selects key words or phrases from the task or the title • Shows no evidence of having read the story

Each writing task is scored by two readers. These two scores are added together to determine the total points achieved for the given task. Each open-ended reading item is also scored by two readers. Unlike the writing scores, however, the two reading scores are averaged.

As students respond to student-constructed tasks and items, they will have access to and be able to use task-specific tools that will help them. For each writing task, students will have a Writer's Checklist to use as a resource for their writing.

Writer's Checklist

Remember to

- ☐ Keep the central idea or topic in mind.
- ☐ Keep your audience in mind.
- ☐ Support your ideas with details, explanations, and examples.
- ☐ State your ideas in a clear sequence.
- ☐ Include an opening and a closing.
- ☐ Use a variety of words and vary your sentence structure.
- ☐ State your opinion or conclusion clearly.
- ☐ Capitalize, spell, and use punctuation correctly.
- ☐ Write neatly.

For each open-ended reading item, students will have the following directions to guide them as they write their response.



For the open-ended question on the next page, remember to

- Focus your response on the question asked.
- Answer all parts of the question.
- Give a complete explanation.
- Use specific information from the story.